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ABSTRACT

This is the report of a 1990 review of Recreation, Parks, and Leisure Studies programs at the University of Florida (UF), Florida State University (FSU), and Florida International University (FIU). Among the conclusions are that these programs are essential to the lifestyle of Florida residents and the continued economic growth of the state. Recommendations include the following: (1) rather than create new programs, existing programs should be provided with the resources and encouragement needed to to permit existing programs to grow; (2) UF has had a high quality program which should receive continued support; (3) the College of Education at FSU is not adequately supportive of the program it administers; and (4) FIU's program needs to work to seek accreditation by the National Council on Accreditation, by 1993 if possible. Considered in the narrative of the report are a definition of the field, curricular options (recreation program services, therapeutic recreation services, and park administration/natural resource management); professional preparation; accreditation and registration; the specific institutional reviews; and recommendations. A biographical summary of the program evaluator is appended. (DB)

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PROGRAM REVIEW

OF

RECREATION, PARKS, AND LEISURE STUDIES

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA
BOARD OF REGENTS

JUNE, 1991

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PROGRAM REVIEW

RECREATION, PARKS, AND LEISURE STUDIES

THE STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA

Conducted January, 1991

Consultant

Dr. Tony A. Mobley, Dean,
School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation
Indiana University

Accepted by Council of Presidents on June 18, 1991

BOR 90-6

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1990, a review of Recreation, Parks, and Leisure Studies programs within the State University System was conducted by Dr. Tony A. Mobley, Dean of the College of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation at Indiana University. The review focused on the extent to which progress had been made toward implementing the recommendations from the 1985 program review. Degree programs in this discipline are presently located at the University of Florida, Florida State University, and Florida International University.

Dean Mobley concluded that programs in recreation, parks, and the leisure service are essential to the lifestyle of the residents of Florida and to the continued economic growth of the state. The State University System of Florida should view professional preparation of individuals to enter these fields as an important responsibility. A strong base has been present in the System for many years, and these programs should be supported and encouraged to continue their growth.

Recommendation to the State University System

Dean Mobley recommended that, rather than to create new programs, it would be more pedagogically sound and economically efficient to provide the encouragement and resources to permit existing programs to grow in order to fill the state's needs. His recommendation is based upon the experiences of other states with such programs.

Recommendations to the Individual Universities

1. UF has had a program of high quality for a number of years which should receive continued support.

2. A quality program exists at FSU, but the College of Education, its administrative home, views its activities as peripheral to the College mission. If further resources are not forthcoming, it may be appropriate to explore the possibilities of moving the program to a more supportive location.

3. FIU's program must move quickly and decisively to seek accreditation by the National Council on Accreditation. If, by the Spring of 1993, the program has not made sufficient progress toward accreditation, it should be terminated.

INTRODUCTION

Leisure is assuming a major role in the lives of most Americans as demonstrated by almost every social indicator and predictor available today. Leisure will not replace work, but it will assume a major role alongside work; indeed, work may not continue to be the dominant life force. This does not mean that the "work ethic" that has guided American society for many years will disappear; rather, a "leisure ethic" will be developed to guide the leisure choices of all citizens in the future. This change of life pattern is coming gradually, but it is coming!

For many years, professionals in recreation, parks, and the leisure services have monitored social factors which influence their field, and new factors are emerging every day. These include the spread of participatory democracy, the rise of the individual, global economy, population growth, aging population, single parent families, population concentration in cities, mobile population and the migration to the Sunbelt, travel and tourism, environmental concerns, dramatic expansion of technology, growth in disposable income, and changing patterns of the work week.

All of these factors greatly influence the planning and delivery of leisure services. Professionals in the future must have a clear understanding of these social phenomena as they meet the demands of new lifestyles.

A Fundamental Cultural Change - the Great Opportunity

There is enormous interest on the part of the general public in leisure activities and leisure lifestyles, along with a concern for safe and healthful living. The mood of the country has shown a dynamic turn toward a concern for human values and a real interest in improving the lives of all people. The news media provide testimony to this movement almost every day. A strong human-services concept has developed, and recreation, parks, and the leisure services are all squarely at the center of this concept. The development of greater physical fitness has become almost an obsession with millions of people. Active participants are replacing spectators in almost every area. There is also a dramatic rise in the interest in the arts and various other related areas. These trends suggest a <u>fundamental cultural change</u> in society, one which is pervasive and certain to remain throughout the foreseeable future.

This change is having a dramatic impact on recreation, parks, and the leisure services. The nation is on the threshold of an era of unprecedented leisure lifestyle development. Although the budgets of public agencies have been restricted, leisure spending remains high. That more money was spent on leisure activities last year than on either the housing industry or national defense indicates that citizens have elected to devote large portions of their incomes to leisure.

Planning for leisure in the 1990's and the new century will

require a new breed of thinkers who can plan for creative, meaningful leisure experiences. This new breed of professional and citizen-supporter must be firmly grounded in the past and also have a view toward the future. It is necessary to conduct programs and manage agencies to deliver services to the people of today, but it is also imperative that innovative planning for the future occur simultaneously.

Planning for satisfying the changing leisure needs of the country is only one of the many challenges in this area. The ways in which the recreation, park, and the leisure services professions respond to these challenges will undoubtedly determine whether they can continue to be viable professions making important contributions to the improvement of the quality of life for all citizens.

Definition of the field

The field of recreation, parks, and leisure studies is currently undergoing changes in terminology. The traditional identification of this field has been recreation and park administration, but the current trend is toward a more clear delineation of the role of leisure in the recreation and park movement.

The basic mission of the field, as generally stated, is to improve the quality of life by providing creative and meaningful leisure experiences for all citizens through: (1) recreation program services; (2) parks, community centers, and other related

areas and facilities for recreation; and (3) leisure education.

Personnel employed in this field work with all age groups, with the handicapped, and with persons of all levels of ability in the recreation and park setting. Positions are generally located in municipal, county, special district, state and federal tax-supported agencies; in voluntary youth service organizations; in commercial enterprises including tourism; and in public and private educational and/or rehabilitational institutions.

While there are variations to the curriculum design and course offerings, and recent years have brought many new options and emphases, curricula in the field of recreation, parks, and the leisure services usually provide three avenues of specialization. These are:

1. Recreation Program Services. This area prepares the professional leadership which is essential to provide appropriate recreation programs. This includes training in the diagnosis of real recreation and leisure needs, program planning, administration and leadership of the programs, and program evaluation. Examples of recreation programming jobs include: recreation center directors, program specialists, playground program directors, camp counselors and directors, interpretive naturalists, senior citizen program leaders, armed forces recreation specialists, church recreation specialists, wilderness program leaders in state and national parks, and other similar recreational leadership positions.

2. Park Administration and Natural Resource Management. Natural and man-made areas and facilities are key characteristics for recreation and park environments and require highly-qualified personnel to administer them. This area trains such personnel. Position examples include indoor recreation planners, park superintendents, park rangers, conservation specialists, special facility managers, and other related positions. An understanding of the natural environment, physical planning, maintenance, and operation are essential competencies in these positions.

3. Therapeutic Recreation Services. The therapeutic recreation specialist is trained to utilize recreation programs to aid in the treatment of physically and mentally handicapped persons while they are hospitalized, and to provide them with recreation skills for community living. Typical employment opportunities for the therapeutic recreation specialist are found in rehabilitation centers, hospitals, educational and training institutions, correctional facilities, and community-based agencies. Examples of positions would include recreation therapist, director of activity therapy, coordinator of special needs, and correctional recreational specialist.

A new and rapidly developing area of interest on the part of professionals in this field is travel and tourism. Many departments in universities throughout the United States have added program options in tourism development. Names of departments have also been changed to include some form of

tourism. (The name of the unit at the University of Florida is the Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism.)

Professional Preparation

In the mid 1900's, colleges and universities began to offer specialized programs of professional preparation in recreation, parks, and leisure studies. The entry level degree for the profession, for those who expect to achieve professional advancement, is generally considered to be the bachelor's degree. Faculty and research positions in colleges and universities as well as in certain public agencies require the doctorate.

The National Recreation and Park Association, through its Society of Park and Recreation Educators, periodically conducts surveys relative to the status of professional preparation in this field. It is extremely difficult to obtain accurate information of this type. The working list contains just over 300 institutions which claim to offer majors in this field at the baccalaureate level or above. In the 1988 survey, 161 institutions responded listing programs in this field, but this probably does not represent the total population. In the professional opinion of this writer, it is estimated that there would be approximately 150 bona fide curricula at the bachelor's level in recreation, parks, and the leisure services. It is estimated that there would be approximately 75 programs at the master's level and 15 to 18 programs at the doctoral level.

There are currently 93 programs accredited at the bachelor's level which is probably the best indicator of the number of quality programs in institutions throughout the United States.

Accreditation and Registration

The National Recreation and Park Association has made a significant commitment to professionalism and quality control through two specific programs: accreditation, and registration (a form of certification). The first program to be accredited was at North Carolina State University, in 1977. As indicated above, there are now 93 programs accredited by the National Council on Accreditation (recognized by COPA) which is sponsored by the National Recreation and Park Association in cooperation with the American Association of Leisure and Recreation. For a number of years, the National Registration Board in conjunction with the professional societies and associations in the various states has provided a voluntary registration plan. A very significant part of this plan is the criterion that those registered in 1986 and thereafter must have graduated from an accredited program in parks, recreation and/or leisure services. Since the registration plan is voluntary, its impact will be in direct proportion to the willingness of employers to restrict employment, where appropriate, to those who meet the Board's requirements. It should be noted that there are three states which have legislatively-mandated certification plans. In most

cases, positions advertised in those states carry the qualifier: "applicant must be certified or meet certification requirements."

Based upon this, the consultant feels that unless an institution is prepared to commit the resources necessary for a program in parks, recreation and/or leisure studies to be accredited, the program should not be offered. Each institution must be encouraged to meet accreditation standards if it chooses to offer a program.

Concluding Comments

This is a growing and dynamic field which is emerging as an important part of American life. It is obvious to the most casual observer that the State of Florida with its strong emphasis upon tourism, recreation, park resources, programs for the elderly, etc., has much to be gained by providing a pool of highly-trained, well-educated individuals to offer professional leadership in recreation, parks, and the leisure services.

NSTITUTIONAL REVIEWS

This program review of recreation, parks, and leisure tudies is a follow-up of the 1985 program review and is an bbreviated format and procedure recommended by the Board of egents Office of Academic Programs. The 1985 program review was complete review based on an internal self-study followed by an xternal review by two consultants: Dr. Tony A. Mobley and Dr. erbert Brantley. The consultants visited each campus to meet ith faculty and appropriate administrators prior to submitting he final report. The 1985 final report forms the basis for this eview. Each institution was asked to provide descriptive data n regard to its program and to outline the progress made toward mplementing the specific recommendations of the 1985 program eview. The external consultant has analyzed the reports and resents the following observations and recommendations.

It should be noted that the abbreviated review approach does ot provide an opportunity for every aspect of the programs to be valuated. In addition to reviewing the written materials which ere submitted, the consultant talked with the chairs of the rograms at Florida State University and Florida International niversity by telephone and in person while at the National ongress for Recreation and Parks. Everyone has been most ooperative, and it is felt that the recommendations have been ased upon solid evidence obtained during the abbreviated review.

IVERSITY OF FLORIDA

The Department of Recreation, Parks, and Tourism in the llege of Health and Human Performance, has offered an excellent ogram in this area since it was established in 1946. With the velopment of the new accreditation program in this field in 76, this department achieved accreditation by the National uncil on Accreditation in 1981.

The 1985 program review document contains five commendations by the external consultants. The department has ovided a detailed response on progress toward implementing the commendations.

1. Steps have been taken to continue the progress which was de since the formation of the department and the achievement of creditation. There has been an extensive study of former aduates and their occupation patterns which has served as an portant source of information for a curriculum revision. culty development programs and professional involvement by the culty have been expanded. In addition, extensive efforts have en undertaken to recruit high quality students for the program. cilities have been improved, and library acquisitions have creased. Many "outreach activities" have been undertaken by e department.

2. In responding to the question relative to the number of e master's degrees awarded since 1985, the department reports at 3, 6, 3, and 11 master's were awarded in 1986, 1987, 1988,

and 1989, respectively. The 1985 program review recommendation to encourage master's students to complete theses has been partially implemented; two students completed theses in 1989. The department should continue to encourage master's students to conduct research and complete theses. Nationwide, it is quite common for master's programs in this field to not require theses for completion. However, it is highly desirable to encourage this activity.

3. The earlier recommendations which called for faculty to intensify efforts in research and scholarly activities in order to support the graduate program, and to place more concentration on scholarship that results in refereed research publications have been partially met. A listing of publications has been provided by the department. Most of these efforts continue to appear in "practical/service" publications rather than in research publications. Faculty should be highly commended for this activity. However, the faculty should be encouraged to intensify their efforts on the research/scholarly aspects of publication.

4. The office space for both faculty and graduate assistants has been improved since 1985. Along with the availability of space for graduate assistants and the availability of computers, it now appears that this recommendation and concern have been adequately met.

5. The department has certainly followed the recommendation

to develop appropriate relationships with other units to provide a stronger program in resource-based park management as reflected by some 14 contacts or activities. The department should be commended for its effort in meeting this recommendation.

Based upon the information available, it is clear that the Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism at the University of Florida has made significant progress toward implementing the recommendations in the 1985 program review. This is a solid program and it is accredited by the National Council on Accreditation in this field.

The only concern is outlined in item three (3) above. The "practical/service" activities and publications should certainly be continued, but members of the faculty are encouraged to also engage in activities which will increase the level of sophisticated research and scholarly activities in further expanding the theoretical base for the field.

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

The Leisure Services and Studies Program in the Department of Human Services and Studies was established in 1951. Following the establishment of a national accreditation program by the National Council on Accreditation in 1976, this program took the necessary steps to become accredited in 1978, and the most recent accreditation renewal was in 1988. The curriculum has been revised since the 1985 program review and provides a very solid offering to the students. Progress has been made in implementing the recommendations, although some concerns remain.

1. It was recommended in 1985 that an additional faculty member be added to the program in order to support the program offerings and serve the number of students. The program continues to operate with essentially the same number of faculty members as were present in 1985 although the assignments and percentage of appointments vary to some extent. There are part-time appointments with administrative responsibilities, phased retirements, and temporary appointments within the department. It is essential that the number of faculty members be held at least at the present level. Any loss of faculty to administrative assignments, retirements, or the loss of temporary appointments, must be replaced with qualified individuals in order to continue this program at its present level. Maintaining a high quality faculty is the primary concern of this consultant.

2. It was recommended in the 1985 review that additional

support be provided for graduate students since only a small amount was available at that time. In the last three years, there has been no "hard money" graduate assistant support available. There has been a small amount of external support for graduate students from time to time, but it has been minimal. In order to attract high quality graduate students and to support the teaching and research of the faculty, it is essential that graduate student support be provided to this program. Not to provide support for graduate students will have an extremely negative long-term impact on this program.

3. In 1985, the consultants recommended that a one time allocation be made to the library to bring its holdings up to an acceptable level. Apparently this recommendation has not been implemented, since no special library allocations have been made. The program has been successful in adding to the library holdings through the use of external funds. The report from the program indicates that during last year the student majors' club held weekly bake sales to raise funds toward the purchase of library materials. While this is a highly commendable activity, one would think that Florida State University would be able to do better.

4. A list of students completing the master's degree since 1985 has been provided, and it shows an increase in the number of students completing the thesis option. It is at a level that would be compared favorably with similar institutions. The

faculty should continue to encourage students to pursue a thesis option in order to strengthen the research skills of graduate students at this level and to encourage an overall research program within the department.

The faculty and administrators of the Leisure Services and Studies Program at Florida State University have followed the recommendations of the 1985 program review that fall within their abilities to accomplish. The primary concern continues to be overall support for the program. It is essential that the number of faculty members be maintained at least at the present level as some changes are now taking place relative to appointment patterns. Funds should be provided to support graduate assistants in order to attract high quality students and to support the teaching and research roles of the faculty. The library acquisitions budget must be supplemented to bring the library to an acceptable level and other general areas of support should be provided. It is the general impression of this consultant that this program operates at a level "so lean" that the future quality of the program may be in jeopardy. Basic support must be provided if it is to continue at the level of quality which would be expected from this institution.

A part of the program review process is to provide a draft of this report to the institutions in order to review the accuracy of the information presented and to provide an opportunity for an institutional response. The response received

from FSU indicated that the program in Leisure Studies has been defined as "peripheral" to the central mission of the College of Education.

The issue was subsequently discussed further in a conference call among the review consultant, appropriate officials from the university, and Board staff. Questions arose such as: Who determines which programs are "peripheral" and which programs are "central?" Is the College of Education the best administrative home for programs which are not teacher education? Are there other administrative structures which could better house the Leisure Services and Studies Program or the Department of Human Services and Studies?

It would seem that a program with continued demand for admission by students and one that has established a successful nationally known program should be supported as central to the mission of its college or else moved to some other unit where it would be considered central. This entire issue should be studied with a view toward resolving the apparent dilemma.

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

The parks and recreation management curriculum was established in 1973 with the addition of a master's program in 1975. The program experienced excellent initial growth and then experienced difficulties including the illness and subsequent death of the program leader and other faculty replacement problems. As indicated in the 1985 program review, the faltering of this program is particularly disappointing when viewed against the background of the potential of the Southeastern Florida region.

Southeast Florida provides an outstanding opportunity for Florida International University in the area of parks and recreation education. No other area in the country provides a better laboratory in support of similar programs. The combined budgets of the units which make up the greater Miami public parks and recreation delivery systems exceed $80 million. These public programs are managed by professionals who generally recognize the need for a professional preparation program at FIU. Additionally, there are numerous non-public agencies which contribute to the total community recreation program. These include youth-serving agencies, retirement homes and centers, resorts and condominium projects, as well as cultural and performing arts organizations. Staff development requirements of all of these agencies and organizations guarantee that there will be continued opportunities for employment of graduates of parks

and recreation programs.

Some progress has been made toward the implementation of the recommendations in the 1985 program review. However, this progress has been extremely slow and the program continues to function at an extremely marginal level.

1. It was recommended in 1985 that two new full-time faculty be added immediately in addition to the use of outstanding adjunct faculty available in the area. One faculty member was added soon after the recommendation, but this individual has been used in various other assignments at the institution. A second faculty member was finally added just this year. A curriculum revision has been completed which has greatly strengthened the program offerings.

2. It was recommended in 1985 that the program move toward seeking accreditation from the National Council on Accreditation. This is the only program in recreation, parks and leisure studies in the State University System of Florida that is not accredited. Because of the slow movement toward faculty additions, it has not been possible to seek accreditation. In order to be eligible for consideration, it will be necessary to add one FTE faculty to the program to meet the minimal standards.

3. In the 1985 program review, it was recommended that if the faculty additions had not been made and accreditation sought, it would be in the best interest of all concerned to phase out the curriculum in parks and recreation management at Florida

International University. It is clear that some progress has been made over the five year period even though it has been very slow. The institution must make the kind of commitment necessary to achieve accreditation. It is recommended that the additional one FTE be added to the program and a commitment made to support the program at an appropriate level within the next two years. At that point, accreditation should be sought from the National Council on Accreditation as soon as the procedural aspects of the application and review can be completed. It does not seem that there should be further delay. Five years to implement a part of the 1985 recommendations is too long. It is recommended that the State University System of Florida give Florida International University two years to bring this program up to standard or move forward with the earlier recommendation to phase-out the curriculum in parks and recreation management.

There is tremendous potential in Southeast Florida for a successful program in parks and recreation management at Florida International University. For a relatively small additional investment of funds, the institution can provide a program that would be of great service to this region. The institution simply must "move forward or get out of the business." It is certainly the hope of this consultant that FIU will make a solid commitment to support the curriculum because of its great potential in this area.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

In addition to the specific recommendations for each individual institution, a final recommendation regarding the entire situation in the state may be useful. In many states there has been a proliferation of recreation and/or leisure studies programs. There are two states in the southeast, each having fewer residents than Florida, that possess more academic programs than Florida. Florida should be commended for controlling growth in this area. While the three programs currently being offered provide a reasonable geographic distribution of offerings it should be pointed out that the number of students enrolled does not appear to be sufficient to fill the professional positions available in the State of Florida and the southeastern region of the United States. Rather than create new programs, it would be more pedagogically sound and economically efficient to provide the encouragement and resources to permit existing programs to grow to fill the state's needs.

Programs in recreation, parks, and the leisure service are certainly essential to the lifestyle of the residents in Florida and essential to the continued economic growth of the state. The State University System of Florida should view professional preparation of individuals to enter these fields as an important responsibility. A strong base has been present in the System for many years, and these programs should be supported and encouraged to continue their growth.

APPENDIX

Biographical Summary of Dr. Tony A. Mobley, Dean, School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation at Indiana University, and Consultant for the State University System Program Review of Parks, Recreation, and Leisure Studies

Biographical Summary

TONY A. MOBLEY

Dr. Tony A. Mobley is Dean of the School of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation at Indiana University. The School has approximately 85 faculty members and 1000 student majors.

Prior to assuming his present position in 1976, Dr. Mobley was Chairman of the Department of Recreation and Parks at Penn State. He was also Chairman of the Department of Recreation and Park Administration at Western Illinois University. He has experience in municipal parks and recreation, YMCA, church recreation, teaching, coaching, and camping in Kentucky, North Carolina, Indiana, Illinois, and Pennsylvania. In 1970, he was selected as a Fellow in the Administrative Internship Program sponsored by the American Council on Education and was assigned to the offices of the Chancellor and Provost at North Carolina State University for the year.

He received the B.S. Degree in Physics and Physical Education from Georgetown College, Master's in Religious Education from Southern Seminary and the Master's and Doctorate in Recreation and Park Administration (1965) from Indiana University.

The National Recreation and Park Association presented Dr. Mobley with the National Distinguished Professional Award in 1981. (This is NRPA's highest award). He received the Distinguished Fellow Award in 1978 from the Society of Park and Recreation Educators, and he was the recipient of the Garrett G. Eppley Alumni Recognition Award from Indiana University in 1975. He also recently received the Honor Award from the American Association of Leisure and Recreation, and was the presenter of an Annual Nash Lecture.

Dr. Mobley served as President of the National Recreation and Park Association in 1979 and was a member of its Board of Trustees and serves on many Association committees. He has been the President of the Society of Park and Recreation Educators, and he has chaired and served on many committees of that organization. He is a past President of the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration, and he has served as the President of the National Institute for Fitness and Sport. For eight years he was on the National Council on Accreditation, and coordinated the Council's activities to achieve recognition by COPA.

In addition to those already noted, he has been active in several other state and national organizations including the American

Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance; the Academy of Leisure Sciences; the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration; the Indiana Park and Recreation Association; and the Indiana Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance. He has been the President of the Association for Research, Administration, Professional Councils, and Societies which is an association with AAHPERD.

He has co-authored a book and has published more than fifty articles in various state and national professional journals, and he is widely sought as a speaker and consultant. The interview of Dr. Mobley in U.S. News and World Report is an indication of the national attention he has received.

He and his wife Betty, have one son, Derek, and they live in Bloomington.